

Complaints Handling Management Policy, Procedures & Guidelines

RATIONALE

Trinity College ('the College') is committed to resolving conflicts resulting from complaints. A professional response to valid complaints ensures a prompt and just outcome and provides an opportunity to restore relationships and improve service.

PRINCIPLES

The College is committed to handling complaints in a manner consistent with the Charter of Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, modelling the Gospel practices of forgiveness and reconciliation by the way conflict is resolved.

DEFINITIONS

Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the College, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

POLICY STATEMENT

The College will use reasonable endeavours to respond to complaints received by it in a just and timely manner with regards to principles of natural justice, fair process and respect for the rights of the parties involved in a valid complaint.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal is responsible for the development, implementation and publishing of Complaints Handling processes in the College in accordance with EREA Policy and Regulatory requirements of WA authorities.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Trinity College "the College" recognises that from time-to-time there may be instances where individuals or organisations disagree with the way the College has handled matters and may wish to lodge a complaint. Individuals and organisations may include, but not limited to: parents, students, suppliers, local residents and external bodies with whom the College have dealings.

The College welcomes feedback from all members of its community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. The College acknowledges that complaints present an opportunity to improve service delivery and is committed to resolving complaints in an efficient, fair and timely manner. The Complaints Handling Guidelines are designed to assist people to understand our complaints handling process.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the College, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

The College's Commitment

The College is committed to handling complaints in a manner consistent with the Charter of Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, modelling the Gospel practices of forgiveness and reconciliation by the way conflict is resolved. This involves respecting, where reasonably appropriate, confidentiality and adopting the principles of natural justice.

To manage complaints effectively, the College has established a Complaints Handling Program in line with both the international complaints handling standard (ISO 10002:2014 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations), and the Australian/New Zealand complaints handling standard (AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organisations).

Our program includes the establishment of an online complaints management system which allows us to effectively capture, manage and report on complaints. Regular analysis of complaints received and the implementation of rectification action, where deficiencies are identified, are key to the College's commitment.

Many issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. In most cases these issues can be resolved at the school level through informal discussions with appropriate staff members.

How Do I Make a Formal Complaint?

If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or simply wish to make a formal complaint you can do so by any of the following means:

1. Sending an email to complaints@trinity.wa.edu.au.
2. Writing a letter to the College addressed to "The Complaints Manager", 2 Trinity Avenue, East Perth WA 6004.
3. Feedback function for Complaints is available on the [College website](#).
4. Phoning the College on 08 9223 8120 to register your concern.

All formal complaints will be logged into our online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following procedure.

The College will accept anonymous complaints and will investigate the issues raised if sufficient information is provided.

Complaint Validity

Each complaint received (usually formal complaint) by the College will be assessed by the College Complaints Manager or Officer to determine if it constitutes a valid complaint.

If a complaint is deemed valid, the following procedure applies:

Step 1 – Valid formal complaints are logged through the College’s online complaints management system where they are screened by one of our Complaints Officers, the Complaints Manager, or in the case of a complaint directly related to conduct by the Principal, Deputy Principal or Member of the School Board, the EREA Regional Director.

Step 2 – All valid complaints will be acknowledged in writing as soon as practicable (within 3 College business days and allocated a status, priority and target resolution date.

Step 3 – The Complaints Officer shall commence an investigation (within 10 College business days of step 2) into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness and natural justice, and make a determination.

Step 4 – Following the determination, if appropriate, the Complaints Officer shall formulate a resolution and provide a written response to the complainant (within 20 College business days of a determination in step 3). The matter will be closed if this response is accepted.

Step 5 – If the initial response is not acceptable, the matter will be reviewed internally by the Principal or the Principal’s delegate (within 20 College business days of receipt of a written complaint about the determination in step 4), who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The matter will be closed if the response of the Principal, or their delegate, is accepted. If the response of the Principal (or delegate) is not accepted by the complainant, the matter may, at the direction of the complainant, be referred to the EREA Regional Director.

Step 6 – If the matter remains unresolved, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives.

Step 7 – All valid complaints received, either verbal or written, will be entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, a corrective action request will be made to address any underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement (at a time appropriate under the circumstances).

Who Handles Complaints?

At the College level against:

- A student – Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing or Principal
- A parent or volunteer – College Vice Principal or their delegate
- A teacher or other staff member – College Vice Principal or their delegate
- A member of College Leadership Team – Principal or their delegate
- College Principal – EREA Regional Director or their delegate
- Member of the College Board – College Principal and EREA Regional Director, who will work with the Chair of the College Board
- Chair of the College Board – EREA Regional Director.

Role of Director General

Please Note: Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the College has dealt with a complaint. The Director General (Department of Education) is responsible for ensuring that the College is compliant with the Registration Standards, which includes effective complaint handling processes. Information is available on the Department of Education website: www.education.wa.edu.au/non-government-school-concerns.

Complaints Relating to Child Protection

There may, at times, be concerns or complaints relating to the College's Child Protection Program, for example regarding the management of a child protection incident.

When a child protection-related complaint is received by the College, it must first determine if the complaint triggers mandatory reporting to the appropriate police and/or child protection agencies. If so, the College must undertake the necessary Mandatory Report and/or Child Protection Report.

Child protection complaints that do not raise concerns of unreported abuse, or risk of abuse, will be managed in the same manner as other complaints received by the College. The complaints will be recorded to ensure that any further developments relating to the same incident or issue are monitored.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality applies with respect to both information relating to the person making the complaint, and, if relevant to a person against whom a complaint is made. The College is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process.

Personal, identifiable information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.

RELATED RESOURCES

The following resources can be read in conjunction with the current document:

- EREA Code of Conduct (adopted by the College)
- EREA Child Safeguarding Standards Framework
- Trinity College Complaints Handling Program – CompliSpace web-enabled content
- Trinity College Privacy Policy & Guidelines

REVIEW SCHEDULE

- Complaints Handling Management Policy, Procedures and Guidelines created in 2018
- Review Changes:

2020	Compliance Officer	Minor contextual changes made. EREA documents amalgamated into a single document. Constructed the section "who handles complaints?"

- Next Review: 2022, in accordance with EREA directives, the College Complaints Handling Policy, Procedures and Guidelines document will be reviewed every four (4) years unless there is a legislative or regulatory requirement to do so earlier.